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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 11th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 125: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (A/46/34, A/47/34, A/47/669, A/47/755, A/48/34, A/48/83 and Add.1, A/48/129, A/48/383, A/48/420, A/48/421; A/C.5/45/75 and A/C.5/46/17)

1. Mrs. DAES (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)) said that the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly was taking place at a time of major changes in international relations and serious disturbances in various parts of the world, which posed difficult problems for the international community. Those problems included the deterioration of the economies of the developing countries, refugees, the AIDS pandemic and the destruction of the global environment.

2. The measures that Member States took to solve those global problems would place demands on United Nations resources, and the role of JIU in strengthening the management efficiency of the United Nations system would become increasingly critical.

3. The annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/48/34), which was currently before the Committee, reflected the basic changes that had been introduced into the Unit's work programme (A/48/129) at the request of the General Assembly.

4. In its resolution 47/201, the General Assembly invited the Joint Inspection Unit, in drawing up its work programme for 1993 and its preliminary work programme for 1994-1995, to make proposals to reflect the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). At previous sessions, the Assembly had called on JIU to adopt a more selective approach in formulating its work programme and to focus greater attention on management, budgetary and administrative issues. The Unit had been guided by those recommendations, which included suggestions made by the participating organizations, and the resolutions and decisions of their governing bodies.

5. In future, the Unit planned to concentrate its inspection, evaluation and investigation efforts on four closely related areas, namely: (i) management, budgetary and administrative issues; (ii) operational activities for development; (iii) peace-keeping; and (iv) humanitarian assistance.

6. The strength of the Unit's work programme for 1993 was that it succeeded in reorganizing priorities in the light of current world developments and adapting to the tighter budgetary conditions under which it had to function, without sacrificing its basic obligations towards Member States and the participating organizations and being as receptive as possible to their priorities.

7. During the period under review, the Unit had used that new approach and had issued 28 reports, of which 3 had been the result of inspection, 10 of investigation, 4 of evaluation and 11 of research. The preparation of most of those reports, as stated in chapter IX of the annual JIU report, had from the beginning involved closer and more frequent contacts with the participating organizations and, in some cases, consultations with a number of Member States. Within the limited financial resources, the Inspectors had visited a number of

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agencies at United Nations Headquarters and, in a few cases, had undertaken direct field missions for consultations with senior officials who were involved in peace-keeping operations or were responsible for the management of important budgetary or administrative projects of the organizations of the United Nations system.

8. Two of the Unit's reports had been completed after the annual report and, in view of their immediate practical importance, were worthy of mention. The first was a note by the Secretary-General on the staffing of the United Nations peace-keeping and related missions (civil component (A/48/421)). The basic aim of the report was to enhance further the Organization's capacity to manage peace-keeping operations which, given the international situation, would continue to increase, as would the civilian component of those operations. About 11,000 civilians, both international and local, were currently participating in those activities. While the Secretariat had taken positive measures in that regard, much remained to be done. In spite of the small size of its secretariat, the Joint Inspection Unit was participating in those operations and, regrettably, had lost a member of its staff, Mr. Mohammed Rouf, in Cambodia. The report addressed the issues of planning and management of peace-keeping operations at Headquarters and in the field and coordination among the various departments and other units involved. Moreover, it examined the evolution of the civilian component, procedures for the recruitment of civilian staff members, problems involved in their training, and conditions of service. Its conclusions and recommendations were addressed to Headquarters, field operations and the United Nations system as a whole.

9. The second report (A/48/420) dealt with accountability and oversight in the United Nations Secretariat. The Unit had carefully evaluated the functioning of the four main internal oversight bodies, namely, the Internal Audit Division, the Central Evaluation Unit, the Central Monitoring Unit and the Management Advisory Service. The four units suffered from basic weaknesses, due largely to the inadequacy of resources and lack of support for their work. The report contained proposals for improving the situation: option I and option II. Option I coincided with the Secretary-General's creation of the Office for Inspections and Investigations. Option II called for the creation of an office headed by an Under-Secretary-General who would be appointed by the General Assembly and who would have extensive functions and powers.

10. The Joint Inspection Unit was determined to enhance its contribution to the achievement of the three goals of the Charter of the United Nations - efficiency, competence and integrity - as the Secretary-General had emphasized in his statement in the Staff-Management Coordination Committee on 20 September 1993.

11. The inspectors had also taken a number of internal steps to increase the Unit's productivity and the relevance and quality of its reports. They were determined to continue to explore further measures to enhance its methodology, effectiveness and credibility in consultation and cooperation with all concerned. There was a need for participating organizations to take complementary steps in order to contribute effectively to the enhancement of the Unit's work. In that connection, she drew the attention of the Committee to a

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series of proposals submitted to the General Assembly in paragraph 40 of the annual report.

12. At its forty-sixth and forty-seventh sessions, the General Assembly had been unable to give adequate consideration to the Unit's annual reports for 1991 and 1992. By resolution 47/201, the General Assembly had decided to resume consideration of those two reports at its forty-eighth session. As a result, all three reports were before the Committee and should be considered together.

13. She recalled the commitment made in 1992, set out in paragraph 60 of the 1992 annual report (A/47/34), to determine the impact of the Unit's work over the years, particularly with respect to savings achieved as a result of its recommendations. That analysis had been conducted by Mr. George F. Saddler, former head of administration at UNESCO and a member of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. According to his report, which covered the eight-year period between 1 January 1985 and 31 December 1992, the savings resulting from the implementation of JIU recommendations had amounted to more than $75 million. Over the same period, the cost of operating the Unit had been $24 million. Some inspectors had been dismayed by the quantitative approach to their work. In their opinion, the approach taken by Mr. Saddler had not done full justice to the savings implicit in the recommendations in certain of their reports. At any rate, all of the inspectors had been challenged by the rigour of the analysis to devote more attention to cost savings in their future work.

14. From time to time some unfavourable remarks were heard about the Joint Inspection Unit. The inspectors welcomed constructive criticism of their output: their reports, confidential letters and notes. Few of the Unit's critics, however, read its reports and notes and fewer still directed their criticism at them, which were, moreover, the Unit's raison d'être. Praise could not be expected from the secretariats of the organizations being inspected since, after all, they were interested parties, but surely, among the many reports and notes prepared over the years there had been something of interest within the sphere of expertise of each of the distinguished members of the Committee. If so, it was important for the Unit to hear reactions, whether positive or negative, to the reports.

15. The Joint Inspection Unit would endeavour to answer any question, provide any clarification and amplify any observation contained in its reports. In any event, the inspectors would be grateful to enter into constructive dialogue that would enable them to serve the interests of the United Nations system more effectively. The Joint Inspection Unit, as an independent system-wide inspection, investigation and evaluation body, was essential in the current world situation, in a system that demanded greater management, efficiency and transparency than ever.

16. Mr. KABONGO (Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the report entitled "Towards an integrated library network of the United Nations system" (A/47/669) and the related comments of the Secretary-General and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (A/48/83 and Add.1), said that the United Nations system represented a unique source of information for the entire international

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community and that it would be regrettable not to take advantage of such a valuable source for both developed and developing Member States.

17. New technologies, if they were well organized, would facilitate rapid access to necessary information for all Member States, researchers, officials of the system and other users. Obviously, if all those services could be utilized, major savings would be achieved both for organizations and for Member States, but in order to achieve those results, the organizations must contribute substantial financial resources.

18. The constant modernization and improvement of library management, increased cooperation and training for librarians would increase their efficiency and hence, the satisfaction of users as a whole. Thus, the Joint Inspection Unit recommended that an inter-library panel should be established within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) to study questions involving libraries throughout the system, to prepare new management standards and to conduct trials of the techniques constantly being developed in the field of the modern information and telecommunications media. Savings would also be achieved by ensuring standardization of procedures and compatibility of computer hardware and software, so that equipment acquired could be used throughout the system. The United Nations Bibliographic Information System (UNBIS) had become a joint bibliographical network utilized by Headquarters in New York and the United Nations Office at Geneva for the management of data and information resources. It served as an encouraging example to be followed in establishing a similar network on a system-wide basis.

19. The Joint Inspection Unit encouraged the Advisory Committee for the Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS) to convene meetings of library directors of the various organizations such as the United Nations, the specialized agencies, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the regional economic commissions, and to enlist the cooperation of directors of the major libraries in Member States such as the United States and France, among others, in order to take advantage of their experience and support.

20. The inspectors believed that the implementation of the ACC recommendations would have a positive effect on the efficiency and management of the data produced by the libraries and would result in savings in the budgets of the organizations.

21. The Joint Inspection Unit welcomed the establishment by ACCIS of a working group chaired by the International Labour Organization (ILO), with a mandate to produce a compact disk read only memory (CD-ROM) containing references to documents and publications of the different agencies within the United Nations, which would enable users to ascertain what materials had been produced throughout the system on a specific topic. ACCIS had also established a Technical Panel on Inter-Library Cooperation, Standards and Management which had already taken a series of practical measures in its area of competence. It should be recalled that the Joint Inspection Unit had encouraged the introduction of the optical disc system at the United Nations, a technology which had been quite favourably received throughout the system. Information on that subject was contained in documents JIU/REP/86/9, JIU/REP/87/6 and JIU/REP/89/11.

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22. The establishment of a network of libraries within the United Nations system had not been welcomed in the same way by all, for many understandable reasons. In any event, it remained an objective that could be achieved with goodwill on the part of all interested parties.

AGENDA ITEM 128: UNITED NATIONS COMMON SYSTEM (A/48/30; A/C.5/48/4)

23. Mr. AMOR (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC)) introduced the report of the Commission for 1993 (A/48/30) and said that, following the biennialization of the Commission's work, only a few items required action by the General Assembly.

24. First, the ICSC recommended a 3.6 per cent increase in the level of the base/floor salary for Professional and higher category staff with effect from 1 March 1994. The base/floor system had been established in 1990 to provide a minimum salary for United Nations Professional staff by reference to the corresponding salary levels in the comparator civil service. It was also used as a reference point for calculating the mobility and hardship allowance and certain separation payments. The proposed adjustment would not represent a salary increase for the vast majority of staff since it would be effected by transferring part of the post adjustment into basic salary, on a no loss/no gain basis. The Commission considered it important to keep the base/floor salary scale in line with the comparator's scale, and that alignment would be achieved with the proposed adjustment. The General Assembly had agreed to an exception to the biennialization arrangements for the purposes of considering the matter in question.

25. The issue of the pensionable remuneration of General Service staff had been under intensive consideration for some years already. At its forty-seventh session, the General Assembly had approved the Commission's recommendation that the same basic methodology (income replacement) and the same interim adjustment procedure (one to one), used in the case of Professional staff, should also be applied to the General Service staff. The Commission was also recommending that 66.25 per cent of net pensionable salary should be taken as the basis for determining the pensionable remuneration of General Service staff. The revised procedure should be implemented at the time of the first adjustment of the salary scale on or after 1 April 1994. The Commission also recommended procedures for determining a common staff assessment scale. That scale would be introduced in 1997 to coincide with the comprehensive review of pensionable remuneration for the Professional category scheduled for 1996. The outcome of that process was a consensus in which all concerned had been compelled to make certain concessions, but which could count on the support of all.

26. The third item requiring the approval of the General Assembly was the question of the language incentive for staff in the Professional and higher categories. That scheme had been introduced in the United Nations more than 20 years previously, with the objective of achieving linguistic balance. A few other common system organizations had subsequently introduced similar schemes and recently several more had expressed interest in them. The question had arisen as to whether such a scheme should be introduced on a system-wide basis and with what parameters. The Commission had concluded that the arrangements

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currently in use in the United Nations could serve as a model for those organizations which considered that language incentive schemes could be useful.

27. A few issues did not require action by the General Assembly but warranted its attention. The first of those was the relationship between hours of work and remuneration. That issue had been considered by the Commission at the request of some Geneva-based organizations, which had claimed that since they had a longer work week than in New York, the remuneration in Geneva should be increased by 11.8 per cent. The Commission had concluded that the issue could have far-reaching repercussions and that such an approach would run counter to the concept of Professional-level work, which had never been circumscribed by work schedule parameters and would not lend itself to such an approach, either in the common system or by outside employers. The Commission had therefore decided to inform the General Assembly of its conclusion that current common system practices with regard to working hours should remain unchanged.

28. In response to various recent requests from the General Assembly, the Commission had reactivated its mandate in the area of personnel policies and had reviewed the role of job classification and training in the general context of human resources management. It had also approved guidelines for the evaluation of training activities, which would help ensure cost-effectiveness in an area where needs continued to outstrip available resources. The Commission had also been extensively involved with the question of performance management. Following extensive research in the public and private sectors, it was finalizing the preparation of a full set of measures, including guidelines for the appraisal and recognition of performance, a framework for reward and recognition programmes, measures to address underperformance and a set of generic training modules in performance appraisal and management. That package would be presented in 1994 in conjunction with the review of conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories. The Commission aimed thus to respond to the interest expressed by the General Assembly and other governing bodies as well as the executive heads, in according greater importance to productivity and accountability. That area was a fundamental element of the process of management improvement and reform.

29. In response to a request from the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, the Commission had reviewed the rates of staff assessment in view of the current status of the Tax Equalization Fund.

30. The Commission had also embarked on a study of issues related to the Noblemaire principle. A programme of studies had been mapped out and its results would be presented in 1994. The Commission would review conditions of service of the Professional and higher categories both in terms of remuneration and the structure of that remuneration as it related to the creation of incentives for performance management and improvement.

31. The Coordinating Committee for International Staff Unions and Associations of the United Nations System (CCISUA) had decided to return to the Commission and he expressed the hope that the Federation of International Civil Servants' Associations (FICSA) would soon follow suit. The Commission had kept open the channels of communication with the staff, who had continued to participate in its technical working groups.

AGENDA ITEM 129: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (A/48/9 and A/48/517)

32. Mr. INOMATA (Second Vice-Chairman of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) presented the report of the Board and recalled that, under General Assembly resolution 46/220, the item "United Nations pension system" should only be considered by the General Assembly in even years. By its resolution 47/203, however, the General Assembly had requested ICSC and the Board to finalize in 1993 the comprehensive review of the pension remuneration of staff in the General Service and related categories and to submit to the Assembly recommendations on all aspects of the methodology for determining the pensionable remuneration of such staff. Given the importance of that issue, the Board had decided to hold a special session to consider the item. It had also considered matters which would otherwise have been addressed by its Standing Committee, in particular, the budget proposals for the biennium 1994-1995 and the actuarial assumptions to be used in the next valuation of the Fund. The Board had also examined the management of the investments of the Fund and the financial statements and schedules for the year ended 31 December 1992.

33. The market value of the Fund's assets as at 31 March 1993 was $11.4 billion - in other words, $1.3 billion more than the year before. The total return on investment for the year was 11.6 per cent, representing a real rate of return of 8.2 per cent. The number of participants in the Fund and the number of periodic benefits in award continued to increase: as of 31 December 1992, there were about 62,000 active participants and 34,000 periodic benefits in award. The number of lump-sum withdrawals and other one-time payments had increased to more than 3,600 for the year.

34. Concerning the comprehensive review of General Service pensionable remuneration, he noted that the Board had been unable to reach a consensus on methodology the year before. The main obstacle had been the fact that the participants' representatives had maintained their initial position that the current methodology was sound and had stood the test of time. They argued that the so-called "income inversion" anomaly was either transitory and of marginal significance in terms of the numbers of persons affected, or was due primarily to deficiencies in the methodology used to determine the pensionable remuneration of the Professional staff. The Chairman of the Board had attempted to bridge the differences of opinion by means of a compromise solution, but the participants' representatives were unable to accept his proposal.

35. In its resolution 47/203, the General Assembly had taken the position that the current methodology had given rise to anomalies and inconsistencies, the most serious being the "income inversion" anomaly. The Assembly had emphasized the need to develop a methodology which would eliminate that anomaly or reduce it significantly, either immediately or gradually. It also believed that the income replacement approach would best meet that need.

36. At a special session of the Board held in June 1993, representatives of the governing bodies and of the executive heads had emphasized the imperative need for the Board to play a constructive role in the final stages of the review, taking into account the specific requests made by the General Assembly and the conclusions reached by the Commission at its March 1993 session. The representatives of the executive heads had noted that the tripartite nature of the Board provided a framework for reaching a consensus on a range of issues

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which, if taken individually, would not lead to an agreement by all parties. Accordingly, a small contact group consisting of three members from each of the three constituent groups had been established so that a consensus could be achieved on all the issues taken collectively.

37. The intricate wording of paragraph 64 of the Board's report (A/48/9) showed how difficult it had been to arrive at a text acceptable to all. The representatives of the governing bodies in the contact group had wanted to reach an agreement with the other two groups on a change in methodology through the introduction of the income replacement approach; at the same time, however, they had not wished to oppose the position taken by ICSC, and endorsed by the Assembly at its forty-seventh session, to use the factor of 56.25 per cent of net pensionable salary in determining the share of staff assessment to be used in calculating pensionable remuneration. The governing body representatives had drawn attention to the efforts made by the participants' representatives in the contact group to convince their colleagues to endorse the income replacement approach. That meant that ICSC had had to reconsider at its July 1993 session certain aspects of its conclusions, particularly the use of 56.25 per cent as the grossing-up factor. The benefits of proposing a possible adjustment in that grossing-up factor had to be weighed against the benefits of achieving a broadly acceptable conclusion to the highly complex and sensitive review of General Service pensionable remuneration begun three years earlier. As indicated in paragraph 49 of the report, the use of the 56.25 per cent factor instead of the 100 per cent currently used would reduce pensionable remuneration by 1.8 per cent to 2.6 per cent, whereas the use of the 66.25 per cent factor would involve reductions ranging from 1.2 per cent to 1.9 per cent.

38. At its July 1993 session, ICSC had decided to recommend to the General Assembly the use of the 66.25 per cent grossing-up factor and had indicated that in 1996 it would consider the possibility of more frequent reviews of staff assessment rates when it recommended the rates for the common staff assessment scale to be implemented in 1997. It had also agreed to re-examine the question of the non-pensionable component in 1996, when it conducted a comprehensive review of the pensionable remuneration of both the Professional and the General Service staff.

39. Paragraphs 66 to 72 of the report described the Board's efforts to propose an amendment to the Pension Fund Regulations which would give effect to the recommendations made by ICSC, should they be adopted by the General Assembly. The proposed amendment was contained in annex VIII.

40. In conclusion, ICSC and the Board were in agreement as to the objectives and major features of the revised methodology: the significant reduction over time of the "income inversion" anomaly through the use of the income replacement approach; the introduction of a common scale of staff assessment to be used in deriving pensionable remuneration for all categories of staff; and dates of implementation and the transitional measure which would mitigate the impact of the changes and protect acquired rights.

41. Special mention should be made of the extensive efforts made in the Board by all the affected parties to achieve agreement on the complex issues involved in determining the amount of pensionable remuneration for General Service staff

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and of the close cooperation between the two subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly dealing with staff conditions of service.

42. The budget proposals elaborated by the Board for the administrative expenses of the Fund were contained in paragraphs 73 to 100 and in annex III of the report (A/48/9). The estimates for administrative expenses would be charged directly against the Fund and included administrative costs, which related basically to the Pension Fund secretariat and its operations, and investment costs, which related to the management of the investments, including the activities of the Investment Management Service. As indicated in paragraph 73 of the report, article 15 of the Fund's Regulations provided that "expenses incurred in the administration of these Regulations by a member organization shall be met by that organization". Since the Board secretariat doubled as the secretariat of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, the United Nations shared in the expenses of the Fund's central secretariat, which was located at United Nations Headquarters in New York and had an office at Geneva. Approximately 56 per cent of the active participants in the Fund were employed by the United Nations.

43. As indicated in paragraph 9 of the report of ACABQ (A/48/517), in conformity with an apportionment agreed to by the Board and the General Assembly, the United Nations share of the expenses for the Fund's central secretariat included one third of the total cost of established posts and a contribution to the identifiable costs of communications. That amount was provided for in section 1 of the regular budget of the United Nations, which included the share of such costs borne by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Consequently, the estimated administrative expenses contained in the Board's report as a charge to the Fund were based on two thirds of the total cost of established posts.

44. The Board had submitted revised estimates for the 1992-1993 biennium amounting to $40.7 million, consisting of the administrative costs of $12.8 million and investment costs of $27.9 million, and estimates for the 1994-1995 biennium in the amount of $39.3 million, consisting of administrative costs of approximately $12.6 million and investment costs of $26.7 million. The administrative costs since 1990 and for the 1994-1995 biennium included the costs of the phased implementation of the major project to replace the Fund's computer-based systems with a new integrated system, as well as the costs of certain changes in the organizational structure of the Fund's secretariat.

45. An optical-disc-based imaging system had been developed and implemented. The Fund's secretariat had evolved from a paper-based, batch-oriented processing environment to an electronic image-based interactive operation both in New York and at Geneva. That transition had required a great deal of retraining of staff, as well as fine-tuning of the newly installed systems, in terms of both hardware enhancement and software development.

46. He noted with satisfaction that the Advisory Committee had recognized the need for additional resources and had not recommended any changes in the budget proposals. In its comments on the anticipated decrease in investment custodial

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fees, the Advisory Committee had noted that a report on the new custodial arrangements would be submitted to the Board at its next session, and had requested the Board to provide to the General Assembly, at its next session, a summary of that report and of the Board's comments thereon.

47. Actuarial matters were referred to in paragraphs 105 to 129 of the report (A/48/9). Because of the rescheduling of the date of the next actuarial valuation to 31 December 1993, in response to the biennialization decision of the General Assembly, the Board had had an opportunity to review some of the assumptions to be used in that valuation, in particular those assumptions which required further study on the basis of additional data.

48. As indicated in paragraph 108, the Committee of Actuaries had recommended, and the Board had agreed, that the mortality rates for service pensioners should be revised to take into account the recent experience of the Fund, the improvement in the mortality rates of service pensioners since 1960 and the world-wide trend towards lower mortality rates, i.e., towards higher life expectancy. The Consulting Actuary had estimated that the changes in the mortality assumptions would increase the actuarial costs for the Fund by about 1.05 per cent of pensionable remuneration. The Board had also agreed to the recommendation of the Committee of Actuaries that the rates of disability for men should be lowered, which would decrease the actuarial costs for the Fund by about 0.20 per cent of pensionable remuneration.

49. The Committee of Actuaries and the Board had also agreed to keep under close review the assumptions regarding early retirements, to determine whether the recent incidence of higher than expected rates of early retirement reflected a temporary phenomenon due to targeted staff reductions and recent changes in the pension adjustment system, or a longer-term trend requiring changes in the assumptions. The tables in paragraph 113 summarized the economic and participant population growth assumptions that would be used in the next valuation of the Fund.

50. In resolution 47/203, the General Assembly had requested the Board to consider the form in which it presented the results of actuarial valuations, taking into account the views of the Committee of Actuaries and the Board of Auditors. As indicated in paragraphs 114 to 117 of the report, the Committee of Actuaries and the Board had considered the views expressed on that subject by several delegations in the Committee in 1992 and by the External Auditors. The Board had endorsed the views of the Committee of Actuaries which were quoted in paragraph 115 of the report. The Committee of Actuaries had expressed serious concerns about some of the observations and requests made by the External Auditors. At the request of the Board, arrangements had been made to initiate joint discussions with the External Auditors.

51. On 4 November 1993, the Chairman and Rapporteur of the Committee of Actuaries, together with the Secretary of the Board, were to meet with a Technical Group of the Panel of External Auditors and, on the basis of the initial exchanges, appropriate arrangements would be made for any follow-up required with the United Nations Board of Auditors. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) had also decided to participate in the

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discussions. The Committee of Actuaries and the Board would review that issue further in the light of discussions with the External Auditors and CCAQ. The Board would report to the General Assembly, at its forty-ninth session, on its response to the request made in resolution 47/203.

52. For the third consecutive year, the Board's report contained information on the status of discussions between the Secretary of the Board and the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus concerning problems in the interpretation and application of the Fund's transfer agreements with the former USSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR. The Board noted that the discussions had not yet resulted in tangible progress. It again expressed deep concern for the plight of the former participants affected and requested its Secretary to continue his efforts to achieve some remedial measures.

53. In the 1992 report to the General Assembly, statistical and financial data had been provided on the 1,647 transfer cases which had been processed prior to the suspension of the agreements in January 1992. At that time, the Board had expressed its readiness to consider favourably the reinstatement of the UNJSPF pension rights of clearly delineated groups of former Fund participants from the former USSR, if the amounts transferred to the USSR Social Security Fund with respect to those former participants were repaid to the Fund, with appropriate interest.

54. In order to achieve meaningful progress, the three Governments concerned must be prepared to respond to the claims of the former participants and to satisfy them, in whole or in part. The Board had requested that a report be submitted to it at each of its sessions on developments in that regard, as well as on other actions which might be taken by individual member organizations of the Fund to provide assistance to those former Fund participants. The Board had also agreed that it would continue to include information on that matter in its reports to the General Assembly.

55. He hoped that the Committee would approve the Board's recommendations, which were summarized in the draft resolution contained in annex IX of its report, and, in particular, would endorse the objectives and the major features of the revised methodology for determining the pensionable remuneration of staff in the General Service and related categories proposed by ICSC and endorsed by the Board. After three years of intensive consultations and negotiations, the Board had been able to reach agreement among its three constituent groups. ICSC and the Board, working in close cooperation, had also reached agreement on the objectives and major features of the revised methodology.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.